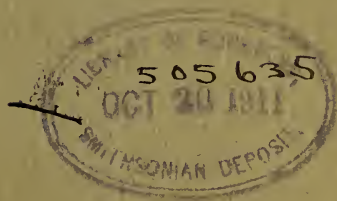
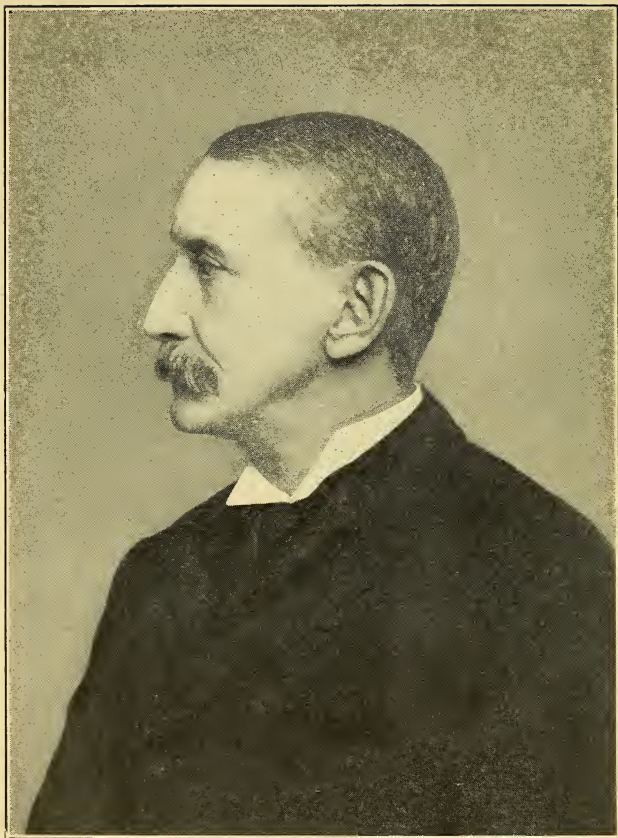


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FRANCIS PHILIP NASH

Hobart college, Geneva, N. Y.
"

FRANCIS PHILIP NASH

Ave carissime

Nemo te magis in corde amicos fovebat

Nec in simplices et indoctos benevolentior erat.

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FROM THE MINUTES OF THE FACULTY

At a meeting of the Faculty of Hobart College, on February 6th, the following minute was adopted:

The Faculty of Hobart College desire to put on record their deep sense of personal grief at the death of Professor Francis Philip Nash. No words of ours can express the loss that his death brings, not only to each one of us, who knew and loved him, but also to the whole community of which he was for so long a time a distinguished and public-spirited citizen. He was a man who exemplified to a rare degree the high ideal of "gentleman and scholar," and no one could meet him without being impressed by his charm of manner, his gentle courtesy, his cultured speech, his breadth and sympathy of mind.

To our College he gave the highest service a man can render—a lifetime of devoted work as teacher, inspired by the loftiest ideals and enriched by all the resources of a broad scholarship and a cosmopolitan culture. Generations of students owe to his training a sense of accuracy and intellectual thoroughness, as well as a vital insight into a great literature. His memory will be forever cherished by Hobart College among her dearest possessions.

RESOLUTION OF THE TRUSTEES

At an adjourned meeting of the Board of Trustees of Hobart College, held at the college library on Thursday, June 15th, the following minute on the death of Professor Nash was ordered spread upon the record:

"Since the last semi-annual meeting of this Board there has occurred the death of Francis Philip Nash, Professor Emeritus of the Latin Language and Literature. Possibly the word 'emeritus' after his name in our catalogue is a sufficient testimonial,—retired after long years of honorable service and his name retained on the rolls.

"A beautiful appreciation of Professor Nash appears in the *Hobart Herald* of to-day, written by his brilliant co-worker of forty years, a co-worker in maintaining the standards and ideals of the college, and his true companion for almost a lifetime in the field of letters.

"But this appreciation is an intimate personal view of the character and accomplishments, and the work of this gifted man whose loss we mourn. To us, the trustees, the view must be more in perspective, running through the long vista of forty years,—almost one-half the life of the college; and the question arises, 'What has Professor Nash done for the college?' It might better be asked, 'What has he not done?'

Who among the teachers that Hobart has been fortunate to have in its faculty, within the memory of the present generation, has shone out more brightly from the background of mediocrity than he? What name has been more powerful to conjure with in the outside world than his? With his broad, deep and polished scholarship, his high-mindedness, his patience, his courtesy, his generous hospitality,—giving freely not only from the bounties of his home but, to those who sought it, from the rich storehouse of his mind—Professor Nash has been a most valuable possession to the college and to the community.

“But there is also a personal loss in his death to each one of us. Some in this Board have had the privilege of his classrooms in their undergraduate days, others personal and friendly relations with him for nearly half a century, others were bound to him by family ties and connections, and all have had an acquaintance which ripened into affection as time advanced.

“It has been the good fortune of Hobart College since its foundation to have in its faculty from time to time a galaxy of stars, always steadfast, whom neither outside allurements nor adverse conditions within could deflect from their appointed course. None, however, were brighter, none truer, none more unselfish and faithful in their endeavor to maintain sound scholarship and high ideals than he whose death we record.

“A lawyer, a linguist, a mathematician, a chemist, an historian, a skilled musician, a politician

in the truest sense, a benefactor to his fellow men, and withal and always a true gentleman, and this not only because he could meet on equal terms the aristocracy of birth, the aristocracy of wealth, and the aristocracy of letters, but because he filled that broader and finer definition of a gentleman,—‘one who always does the kindest thing in the kindest way.’

“These things can be said of Professor Nash now that he is gone, and could at all times have been said without flattery, because they are true.

“We extend to his widow and children our heartfelt sympathy, and beg the privilege of sharing in their loss. To them and to the college has been left a legacy of work well done, of a life well spent, and a record of quiet achievement which many another, less gifted, would have made tell for his own worldly advancement and renown.”

THE LATE PROFESSOR NASH

Reprinted from the *New York Evening Post*.

To the Editor of THE EVENING POST:

SIR: Prof. Francis Philip Nash, of Hobart College, who died at Boston, February 5, was a scholar and personality of so rare and fine a type that more than passing notice should be taken of his death. A singularly high-minded and noble-hearted servant of truth and of his fellows, he was utterly devoid of personal ambition and had been content to occupy for many years an inconspicuous position as professor of Latin. Very exacting in his standards of scholarship, his severe self-criticism and freedom from any desire for renown kept him from publishing, in permanent form, any contribution to the literature of his subject beyond a little book on "Two Satires of Juvenal." But, assuredly, he made the chair at Hobart one of the great Latin chairs of the country, if greatness be measured in terms of distinguished excellence exemplified by the teacher and demanded from the scholars. Many Hobart graduates of the past forty years gratefully remember the precision and breadth of scholarship and the painstaking care with which he directed and inspired them, no less than the high-bred courtesy, charm, and kindness of his bearing.

I had the good fortune to be a colleague of Professor Nash's at Hobart for twelve years, and to

enjoy his friendship. A man of the most unflinching integrity in his moral fibre, he was, at the same time, ever kindly, courteous, and urbane in temper. No thought of self ever seemed to cross his mind.

When there are added to these qualities his remarkably wide and accurate scholarship, and his keen and many-sided interests in man and nature, it becomes evident what a rare blending his personality afforded of temperament, virtue, and humanistic learning.

Professor Nash was born in Italy of New England parentage. He sprang from a long line of New England ancestors. He lived abroad until his sixteenth year, when he entered Harvard College. Here he at once distinguished himself for scholarship. He was soon looked upon as the intellectual leader of his class. After graduation he entered the Harvard Law School, and was later in the office of David Dudley Field, afterwards opening an office for himself in New York city.* The strain of law practice in a great city was too much for a constitution never robust. On the advice of his physician Mr. Nash resigned the practice of law. Although possessed of comfortable independent means, he was unwilling not to serve his fellows in some regular vocation. His thoughts turned to teaching, and in 1871 he went to Hobart, where he remained as professor of Latin,

*Soon after graduating from the Harvard Law School, he collaborated in the editing of the United States Digest. This was in Boston, in the law office of George Silsbee Hale. Later, in New York, he was one of the compilers of the New York Civil Code, under the direction of David Dudley Field.

except for a short interval, until his retirement in 1908.

A fine classical scholar, Professor Nash was equally at home in modern European languages and literatures, especially in the Romanic literatures. He never ceased adding to his linguistic apparatus. A few years ago I called to see him just as he was recovering from a severe attack of lumbago, and found him deep in Hungarian. He had also a considerable knowledge of Semitic and other Oriental languages. His acquaintance with ancient and modern European history, both religious and political, was extensive and profound. He was particularly at home in the political history of the past two centuries, and, when he could occasionally be persuaded to deliver a public lecture, as upon Cavour, for example, we were given a great treat.

Professor Nash had paid considerable attention to chemistry and microscopy, and never lost his interest in the progress of the natural sciences. He was an ardent student and practitioner of music. He had given much thought to the fundamental problems of theology and philosophy. In the midst of these manifold scholastic pursuits, Professor Nash never neglected the duties of citizenship. He kept himself thoroughly informed on all important political, social, and educational questions. He was an earnest supporter of political reform movements, and of cautious social reconstruction. He gave of his time unsparingly for the training of the Italians of Geneva in cit-

izenship. Every decent Italian there looked upon Professor Nash as a friend and counsellor, and never in vain. Professor Nash held very decidedly to the view that the proper function of the small college is to represent the highest standards of excellence in non-utilitarian and humanistic studies, to awaken in its students a sense of the highest values in pure scholarship and in citizenship.

As I look back upon the personality of my old friend and colleague, I see that all things conspired to develop in him a character strong and beautiful in its gentleness, integrity, and purity, and a mind exceedingly rare in its union of accuracy with extent of knowledge, its combination of vitality, penetration, and manifoldness of interest. The moral earnestness of his New England heritage and the native sweetness of his temperament were infused with a mellowness and a light to which his early Italian life contributed in large measure. The result was a personality of singular strength and grace. His cosmopolitan training, his native ability and never-flagging thirst for knowledge made of him a man of the world who was also a scholar of the Renaissance type—an Erasmian spirit and a high-minded Christian gentleman.

JOSEPH A. LEIGHTON.

Ohio State University, March 7.

PROFESSOR FRANCIS PHILIP NASH

Reprinted from *The Hobart Herald*

Professor Leighton, who knew and prized our late Emeritus Professor of Latin, wrote lately an admirable appreciation of his character and talents which was printed in the New York *Evening Post*. Mr. Nash had, in fact, been an occasional contributor to *The Nation*.

But I have promised to the HOBART HERALD some more intimate impressions and reminiscences of one who was a figure in our College life and whom the most earnest of our alumni recall with a special esteem and admiration. I can say here, among ourselves, some things which are less fitting for the general public, and, which, nevertheless, ought to be said, *chez nous*, amid our College family. He was our own, and we had reason to be proud of him. I may speak the bare truth about him now, when he can no longer blush at the praise he would have disclaimed. For the barest truth can mean nothing but his praise.

* * * *

In the class of 1856, at Harvard, Mr. Nash obtained what is called an old-fashioned education in a small college. For Harvard College, at that time, as distinguished from its professional schools, contained only four hundred students.

One of his classmates, Charles Francis Adams, in an address entitled "A Modern Fetich," complained bitterly and brilliantly that his education had been neglected at Harvard,—that he had been taught Greek which he never really knew, while he had been stinted and stunted in the Modern Languages. It is generally agreed that Mr. Adams's career was not ruined by this misfortune and that he got bravely over it. Mr. Nash did not suffer as his classmate did; he had no reason to complain of the Harvard of his time, and I never heard him complain. In fact he gained there an effective and useful introduction to the main avenues of Thought, and even of Modern Science. Apart from the Professional Schools of Law, Medicine and Divinity, no advanced University instruction existed at that time in the country.

For certain languages, it might be said that he had specialized. In three, beside the English, not only could he talk fluently and correctly, but he wrote them with idiomatic ease, with elegance and literary charm. Italian, French and Latin he knew *au fond*; he had a mastery of the language and literature of each, yet in Latin, he was "more at home" as he said, than in any other. His friends who had experience of nothing but his English, remember well with what richness, propriety and precision he used our language, so often now maltreated; he never condescended to be slipshod in his speech, to wear the lazy rags and tinsel of second-hand slang. His native

vivacity of expression needed no borrowed flashiness of phrase. Yet in French and Latin he had, perhaps, a wider range. He had written frequently for French periodicals, and he had done some very delicate and difficult work in Italian—a version of some portions of the Prayer Book for which he had no ready-made models, and which involved a stylistic study of Boccaccio, Machiavelli, and other early prose writers. But, in fact, he was penetrated by the literature, the ideas and the style of all these languages. They were a part of his fibre and daily habit of thought; whereas, in the equipment of many teachers of language, their knowledge is an acquisition, an excrescence rather than a growth; it is an asset carried in a wallet, detachable and transferable, perhaps, but not a furniture of the chambers of the mind.

In Latin, Mr. Nash's special author was Juvenal, of whom he had prepared after years of patient research an edition, with notes and various readings suited to the advanced student and scholar. The carelessness of an editor, and the accident of a transfer of publishers prevented the publication of the complete work. But the Two Satires of Juvenal which was issued by Houghton Mifflin, & Co., received discriminating praise for the neatness, concision and originality of the annotations.

Mr. Nash read habitually, and with ease, Greek, German and Spanish, and spoke the latter two with idiomatic precision. He had an adequate acquaintance with the masterpieces of each

of these literatures. He was one of the few scholars in our country who knew anything about the abstruse subject of ancient Greek music; being conversant with the treatise of Aristoxenus, the collection of Meibomius and the notation of the Delphic Hymns. On these topics he had contributed articles occasionally to *The Nation*. I may add, in passing, that the musical terms in Greek mean nothing to the ordinary student unless he is also a musician trained in the theory and history of music.

He had a sound working knowledge of Arabic, Hebrew and Russian, to which within a few years he had annexed Hungarian. From this he had lately translated some clever dramatic sketches and idylls, for which he had received the hearty acknowledgments and compliments of the authoress.

He was never a niggard of the treasures of his scholarship, but dispensed them without price and with a noble Platonic liberality. It was quite characteristic that, only a month before his death, he spent some labor on translating from the Russian a monograph on the apple-tree moth, which was much needed in connection with the researches of one of the staff of the Agricultural Experiment Station in Geneva. For translating this brochure a prohibitive price had been asked by a Russian Professor in New York City.

This little service to a brother in science was characteristic, as I have said; for, time and again, he had spent freely his leisure and learning in

revising or recasting manuscript which some author had too cheerfully flung upon his hands, or, it might be, the formless incubus thrust upon his brain by some ingenuous foreign lady with the polite request, "Please put this in shape for your American readers, and find me a publisher." For such innocents all that could be done by painful drudgery he undertook with chivalrous and unselfish devotion.

If this list of acquirements sounds exaggerated, let me refer to an impartial authority. Some ten years ago the President of one of our most solid Universities in the West, a gentleman of world-wide experience, who had just lost by a fatal accident the head of his department of Romance Languages, consulted me as to whether Mr. Nash would accept the vacant position. "I know all the available men in the country—and there is no one so fit as he—no one to be compared with his peculiar fitness." I agreed with him; but we also agreed that the exacting duties of the chair, at his time of life, would be too much for a somewhat delicate constitution.

* * * *

But his interest in language, while it was partly technical and professional, always emerged in a study of literature, of ideas, of the heart and spirit of mankind, and this too was the goal of his research in what are called the Humanities. "Much had he traveled in the realms of gold." His study of books was only one side of his study

of Life, of character, of human nature. He was a man of the world,—one might say a citizen of the world,—a Ulysses who had brought home from his travels and experience a knowledge of cities, of society and manners, of courts and salons, and the personages who make up the great world. History and biography reinforced this knowledge so wide and intimate, which was not that of the gossiping clubman, but that of the diplomatist and statesman. Diplomacy, indeed, he might have chosen for his career, if the Civil Service of our country were more apt in discovering diplomatists such as he would have made. His legal training, which colored or illuminated his view of many subjects, would have fitted him for the duties of a foreign minister, as also his gift of tongues, his special lines of research which embraced the treaties, the intrigues, the tangled web of European politics in the last century, and finally, I may add, his sensitive, puritanic conscience.

In his judgments of politics and public acts he applied the same rigid unswerving standard as in the details of private life. He was, therefore, an Independent deeply interested in reforms and in the perfecting of the Civil Service. He was perfectly ready, if need be, to form a party of one, consisting of himself alone. If he thought he saw justice ahead, he wanted to reach it by the straightest line, regardless of apparent consequences. Hence, in spite of his own misgivings and his vehement disapproval of the freaks of

English suffragettes, he favored an immediate franchise for women. It is certainly a rare and beautiful thing to meet a man who applies the same pocket-compass equally to the tactics of a game of football, or to College politics, or to the annexation of the Philippines. In moral questions, he took his bearings from the Polar Star. I could always agree heartily with his principles; I could not always accept his judgments of public men, which to me seemed not to make sufficient allowance for the capricious turns of Fortune's wheel, for the complexity of human nature, and the viscous element in which the statesman works, thwarting and baffling his best intentions. Mr. Nash's interest in European politics was vital and began in his youth. It was a legacy from his father, who had received, after the fashion of the day, a jewelled snuff-box from Victor Emanuel, in recognition of repeated services and charity to Italian refugees.

But his keen intellectual curiosity did not rest satisfied with Linguistics, or the Humanities, or the Law. He was almost equally interested in Nature and the natural sciences. In Chemistry, in modern Physics, in Biology and Physiology, he had a solid foundation, a firm grasp of principles and the most recent theories. He had acquired by actual practice the scientific insight and method. As he had a natural mechanical and manual dexterity, he was an expert in the laboratory, in the use of instruments and machinery. For several years he had assisted our late

Professor Hamilton Smith in those microscopic observations of the Diatomaceæ which became known to European savants. His furniture, therefore, on the scientific side was not the haphazard curiosity-shop of the ordinary amateur. If he talked of flowers, or birds or medicine, he was fit to talk with the botanist, or the ornithologist, or the physician and surgeon. He was competent to expose the brilliant paradoxes of a brilliant amateur like the late Samuel Butler. Finally, his science was held fast by his excellent grasp of mathematics, and of mathematical theory and principles. In brief he had an intelligent and instructed outlook on the wide horizon and scenery of the Universe.

In Theology and Church History, he had the outfit of a presbyter of the Church—much more, in fact, than the outfit of the ordinary clergyman. The origin and the documents of Christianity—the language of the documents, the outlines of patristic literature, the critical problems of the Old Testament and the New, the history of ecclesiasticism—with all these he was adequately familiar, to all he had conscientiously applied his own mind, resorting to the ancient and original sources. A Bishop might have ordained him, and perhaps have learned something in the process of his examination. I mention this to illustrate the thoroughness with which he approached the serious problems of life. He never felt a “call” to the ministry nor would he have entered it, but he had probed with his own labor

the sources of the Christian Faith. I contrast this with the singular attitude of some young students of Theology who are willing to take the ordination vows with a light heart, and to expound to congregations the sacred books whose language they have studiously eschewed—who seem to expect on their own behalf a new miracle of inspiration and the gift of tongues.

It would be unfair to leave this summary without a glance at his tastes and accomplishments. He was a trained and finished musician. To music and its luxuries, if he had followed his bent, he might have devoted himself exclusively. Its theory and the history of its development were familiar to him. He played the organ and piano with an exquisite touch, and he sang with a delicate and instructed ear. In matters of art, he was a connoisseur who could give adequate reasons for his judgments and opinions. Finally, he wrote verses which deserved the name of poetry.

It is natural, perhaps, in reading this long list of attainments and accomplishments, to ask with some scepticism, is this possible, is it not a portrait colored by the partial view of friendship? But it is easy to explain what looks like a marvel. Most of us, who have had the opportunities of a "higher education," consider that it is finished, when it is only just begun. The men who really achieve things never forget that "Art is long." The rest of us, who are cheerfully looking forward to eternal life, prepare for it by racing away from the shadow of our own selves, from the tedium of

our own society, from the ineffable burden of observing and thinking. We fly from ourselves in motors and aeroplanes. We are cocksure, because we have never reflected. We are even angry with those who think differently from what we fancy to be our convictions. And so the chrysalis that emerged from College with some promise of wings, remains a chrysalis. Mr. Nash never stopped; he observed the motto of his own book-plate:

γηράσκω δ' αἰεὶ καὶνὰ διδασκόμενος

Ever as I grow old, I learn and learn.

He followed the Gleam, always exploring; he gained, if not "the Happiness of those who know the causes of things," at any rate, the joy of the quest—some knowledge of himself, of the world and of his fellow-men.

Naturally, the Sphinx propounded to him, also, her riddle, which he answered well by living nobly and manfully through that span of uncertain light which is permitted us between two darknesses. The ready-made answers of the philosophers and the theologians, which most of us accept without inquiry, he conscientiously explored,—beating his wings in vain against the walls of the inexorable cage. He has his answer now, for which he waited. He never settled into the dogmatism of extreme scepticism. He put his trust in the benevolence of a Deity, whose ways he acknowledged to be inscrutable. The irreparable loss of a son who was the apple of his eye,

and the ideal of his scholarly aspirations, never plunged into pessimism or despair that warm and tender heart so sensitive to "the slings and arrows of outrageous Fortune."

I have here given the picture of a soul that in its earthly pilgrimage had built itself—not without noble toil—a palace of many windows from which the trained intellect looked out upon the pageant of the universe, the wonder and the mystery of mankind. Though in some sense he was "like a star, and dwelt apart," yet he was absolutely free from the pride of intellect. There was no condescension in his nature. He could never, with Lucretius, have looked down complacently "from wisdom's guarded keep" on the wandering multitude below, nor have said with Horace,

Odi profanum vulgus et arceo.

It was pure goodness which he admired, and pure goodness which he practised. He loved to spend himself for his friends, for the sick, or the poor or the unfortunate. His ministrations were all the more welcome because of their delicacy and sympathy. His devotion to the Italians was, as I have said, a pious heritage from his father's interest in the dawn of the Risorgimento. But to all the unfortunate he gave not only money and sympathy, but what is much more, his time and the fatigue of a patient courtesy. He would entertain by the hour some faithful and enthusiastic Calabrian, captivated by his winning manner, who delighted to pour out his heart or

his troubles to a listener that could respond in his native tongue. For such people he worked in public and private. He was to them a counsellor and guardian—a guardian angel, I might say,—a serviceable patron saint.

I can quite understand the worship of ancestors and Heroes and Saints. In such matters I am at once a Catholic and a heretic. For I should erect the shrine of devout and grateful remembrance, not to a Saint Francis, or a San Antonio, or to our Lady of Lourdes, but to the saints who are close by—in one's own household, perhaps, or in one's own circle of friends. These are the near and efficacious saints for whom each of us may make his own Calendar and canonization, and may raise his private shrine. These are the surest emblem and proof to us of the Divinity that inheres in the core of things.

These we may safely reverence and imitate, and invest with the faint halo of tender memory—the guides and patterns of ideal Life amidst bewilderment and confusion. These are our truest friends, among the many kinds that bear the name. For some of our intimates—who must and ought to be our intimates—drag us alway by their conversation into the trivial and the Commonplace. You must bear with them as a Lenten duty and sacrifice, or you must fall to the level of their taste. With others again, you get no forwarder; you see them day after day,

“but evermore

Come out by the same Door wherein you went.”

But all who had daily converse with our friend, would agree that to know him was a liberal education. No student ever spent an hour with him who did not go away enriched and informed. No young girl ever sat beside him at the dining table whom he did not flatter by treating her as a rational human being; and she thanked him in her heart for the compliment. Light and graceful in conversation, with a delicate play of wit and fancy, he had no habit of talking down to people, or of that badinage which ends in mere froth and smoke. In fine, we who loved and knew him best may use without hyperbole the tender and wistful words:

Quanto minus est cum reliquis versari quam
tui meminisse!

How sweeter far than converse with the Living,
is the charm of thy memory!

I need not dwell upon my own personal loss—especially in writing for College men. They know what friendship means; they can divine the beauty and the poetry of an intimacy which for forty years never knew the shadow of a cloud. To lose such a companion is to lop a branch from the Tree of Life, when the sap no longer runs and the leaves begin to fall.

JOSEPH HETHERINGTON McDANIELS

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Vol. IX

JULY, 1911

No. 4, Supplement

Published by Hobart College, Geneva, N. Y. Issued quarterly.
Entered October 28, 1902, at Geneva, N. Y., as second-
class mail matter, under Act of Congress
of July 16, 1894.

